

SEEK FIRST: THE GOOD SHEPHERD

John 10:11

“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.



The road, the journey, the destination

THE ROAD

- **Matthew 7:14 (NKJV)**
- ¹⁴ Because^[a] narrow *is* the gate and **difficult *is* the way** which leads to life, and there are few who find it.

The shepherd leads the way

- ²³The steps of a *good* man are ordered by the LORD,
And He delights in his way.
²⁴ Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down;
For the LORD upholds *him with* His hand. (Ps 37)

Exodus Route

The Date of the Exodus: 1446 BC

Pharaoh who killed Hebrew children: Amunotep I: 1532-1511 BC
 Pharaoh's Daughter who adopted Moses: Hatshepsut: 1526 BC
 Pharaoh of Moses' flight to Midian in 1486 BC: Thutmose II/Hatshepsut: 1498-1485 BC
 Pharaoh of the Exodus: Thutmose III: 1485/1464 - 1431 BC
 Red sea crossing: Straits of Tiran on the gulf of Aqaba on day 25
 Mt. Sinai: Jebel/Mt. Lawz in Saudi Arabia arriving on day 45 spending 11 months
 Kadesh Barnea at El Beidha beside modern Petra spending two years.
 Crossing the Jordan in 1406 BC, 40 years to the day they left Egypt.



The Shepherd is good - often leads us through the wilderness

¹⁷ Then it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God did not lead them *by way* of the land of the Philistines, although that *was* near; for God said, “Lest perhaps the people change their minds when they see war, and return to Egypt.” (Exodus 13:17)

The Shepherd often let us experience Marah before Elim (Exodus 23:23-27)

- Marah: bitter water
- There He made a statute and an ordinance for them, and there He tested them, ²⁶ and said, “If you diligently heed the voice of the LORD your God and do what is right in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, *I will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I am the LORD who heals you.*”
- Elim: 12 fountains and 70 palm trees

The Shepherd may send us into the storm

- ⁴⁵ Immediately He made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, to Bethsaida, while He sent the multitude away. ⁴⁶ And when He had sent them away, He departed to the mountain to pray. ⁴⁷ Now when evening came, the boat was in the middle of the sea; and He *was* alone on the land. ⁴⁸ Then He saw them straining at rowing, for the wind was against them. Now about the fourth watch of the night He came to them, walking on the sea, and would have passed them by. ⁴⁹ And when they saw Him walking on the sea, they *supposed it was a ghost*, and cried out; ⁵⁰ for they all saw Him and were troubled. (Mark 6)

THE JOURNEY

- “Fear not, for I have redeemed you;
I have called *you* by your name;
You *are* Mine.
² When you pass through the waters, I *will be* with you;
And through the rivers, they shall not overflow you.
When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned,
Nor shall the flame scorch you.
³ For I *am* the LORD your God,
The Holy One of Israel, your Savior; (Isaiah 43)

- for He has said, “I WILL NEVER [under any circumstances] DESERT YOU [nor give you up nor leave you without support, nor will I in any degree leave you helpless], NOR WILL I FORSAKE *or* LET YOU DOWN *or* RELAX MY HOLD ON YOU [assuredly not]!” Hebrews 13:5b (Amplified Bible)

THE JOURNEY: How should we follow the Shepherd?

- **³ Trust in the Lord**
- **⁴ Be delighted with the Lord.** Then he will give you all your heart's desires.
- **⁵ Commit everything you do to the Lord.** Trust him to help you do it, and he will.
- **⁷ Rest in the Lord;** wait patiently for him to act.
- **¹¹ But all who humble themselves before the Lord** shall be given every blessing and shall have wonderful peace.
(Ps 37)

THE JOURNEY (not necessarily the road) gets better

- But the path of the just *is* like the shining sun,^[a]
That shines ever brighter unto the perfect day.
- ¹⁹ The way of the wicked *is* like darkness;
They do not know what makes them stumble.

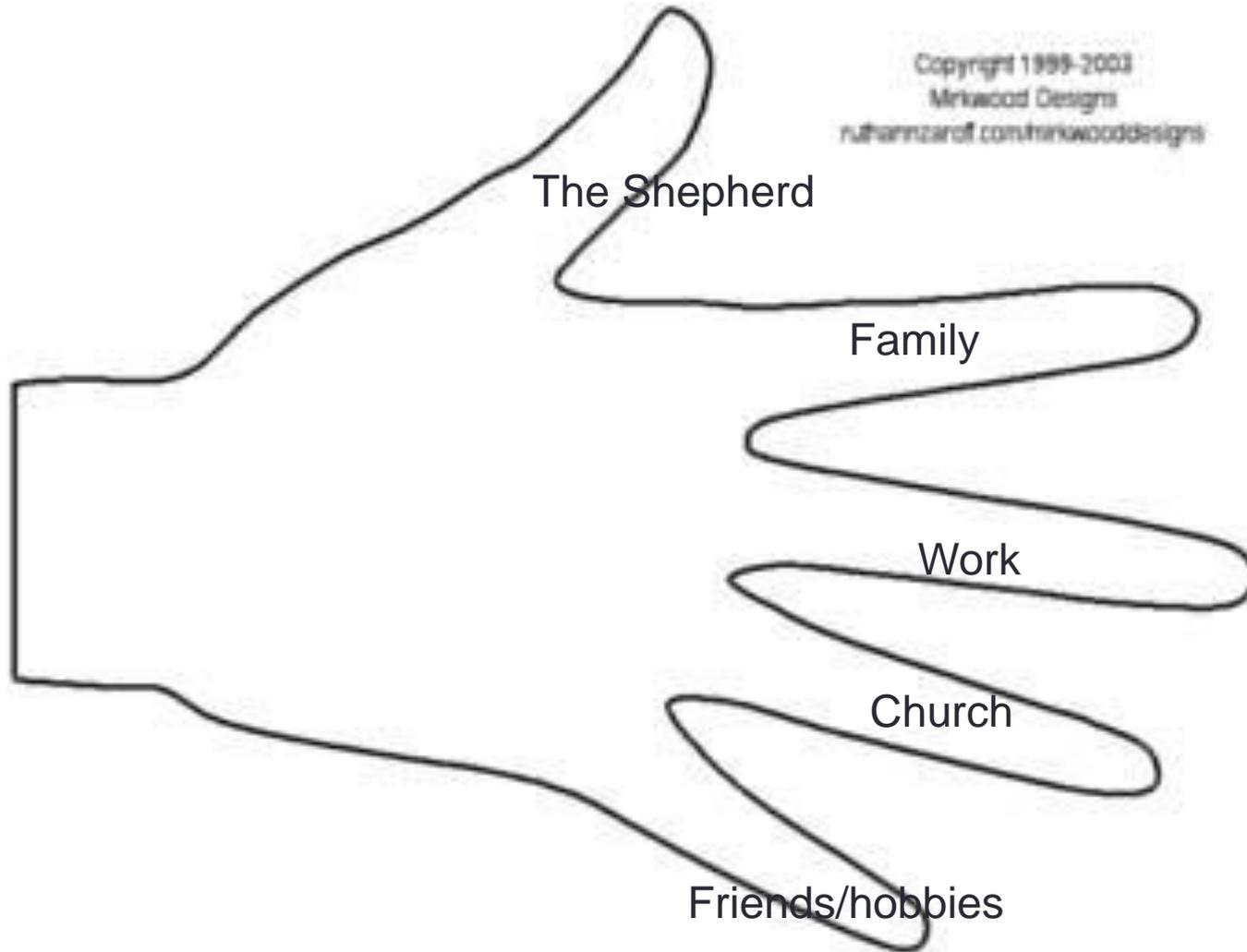
(Prov 4:18-19)

Good (godly) order along the way

- For though I am absent in the flesh, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your *good* order and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ. (Colossians 2:5)

Seekfirst: The Shepherd

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rulfarmzardof.com@mikwooddesigns



Psalm 23: example of Godly order

- The LORD *is* my shepherd;
I shall not want.

⁶ Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
All the days of my life;
And I will dwell^[a] in the house of the LORD
Forever.

The destination

- **Romans 8: (NKJV)**
- ²⁸ And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to *His* purpose. ²⁹ For whom He foreknew, He also predestined **to be conformed to the image of His Son**, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren

Oswald Chambers: growing in knowledge of the Shepherd

- Which are the days that have furthered us most in the knowledge of God- the days of peace, sunshine, prosperity?
- Never! The days of adversity, the days of strain, the days of sudden surprises, the days when the earthly house of this tabernacle was strained to the last limit.
- We would never know “the treasures of darkness” if we were always in the place of placid security.

[Isaiah 45:3](#)

- I will give you the **treasures of darkness** and hidden riches **of** secret places, That you may know that I, the Lord, Who call *you* by your name, *Am* the God **of** Israel.
- In spite of all our rush and interest in the work of this world, and in spite of all our logic, the implicit sense of God will come and disturb our peace.

Question

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Do I welcome the Good Shepherd to lead me in ways that will interrupt my life, or have I put a “do not disturb” sign on the door of my life?